

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-4, and 6-24 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 7 are amended. Withdrawal of the rejections in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 18-24 are allowed, and that claim 17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. However, for the reasons set forth below, claim 17 has not been rewritten in independent form at this time.

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4 and 6-12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,794,290 to Roberts in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,036,177 to Aouad et al. (hereinafter "Aouad"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a drum type washing machine. The washing machine includes at least one ceramic receiver provided on an inner surface of a drum and extending along an axial direction of the drum. Each ceramic receiver is configured to receive at least one ceramic piece therein. Each ceramic receiver comprises a housing having a first, open side which is configured to face a corresponding portion of the inner surface of the drum and to receive the at least one ceramic piece therein, and a second, circumferential side including a plurality of openings formed therein, and a cover configured to cover the first, open side of the housing. The housing is configured to lift laundry items in the drum as the drum rotates.

Roberts neither discloses nor suggests the features of independent claim 1, or the claimed combination of features.

Roberts discloses a ceramic tile 10 fitted to the inside of a wash basket 12 to improve the washing ability of wash water. The tile 10 includes a concave side 14 facing the interior of the wash basket 12, and a convex side 18 adhered to the inner surface of the wash tub 12 by adhesive strips 20, 22. One of the strips is permanently attached to the convex side 18 of the tile 10, and the other of the strips is permanently attached to the inner surface of the wash basket 12. Roberts discloses different embodiments with different shape tiles and different types of adhesive strips. Neither of the strips 20, 22 includes any type of receiving space. Thus, Roberts necessarily neither discloses nor suggests that the strips 20, 22 are able to receive the tile therein, as is the at least one corresponding receiver recited in independent claim 1, let alone a receiver comprising a housing and a cover as recited in independent claim 1.

Further, Aouad (and in particular, the Aouad provisional application as noted in the Amendment filed January 10, 2007) fails to overcome the deficiencies of Roberts. Aouad discloses a housing structure for laundry rinse additives in Figure 3 (referred to in the Office Action). The housing includes a base 30 and a cover 31. A rinse additive packet 33 may be inserted into the assembled housing through a notch 32 in the cover 31. Once inserted, the notch 32 is closed by a hinged lid 34. Centrifugal force generated by a high speed spin cycle causes a frangible seal on the additive packet 33 to break. As the drum 27 fills with water for the rinse cycle, water enters the housing through slots 38 in the cover 31, and the rinse additive is

flushed from the housing and into the drum 27 through the apertures 37 along the bottom of the cover 31.

The portion of Aouad's housing that faces the inner surface of drum 27 is clearly the bottom portion of the base 30. This portion of the base 30 appears to be solid, and thus necessarily not open. Instead, the base 30 is open on a side which faces the central portion of the drum 27, and away from, or opposite to, the inner surface of the drum 27. Thus, Aouad neither discloses nor suggests a housing having a first, open surface which is configured to face the inner surface of the drum and to receive the at least one ceramic therein, and a second, circumferential surface including a plurality of holes formed therein, as recited in independent claim 1, let alone a cover configured to cover the first, open surface, as recited in independent claim 1.

Further, Aouad's structure extends along a circumferential direction of the drum 27, and not along an axial direction, as does the receiver recited in independent claim 1. Additionally, it would not have been obvious to re-orient Aouad's structure to an axial orientation, as Aouad's system requires the impact generated between the base 30/cover 31 and the packet 33 to break the packet 33 and release additive into the drum 27. This could not be achieved if the base 30 and cover 31 were re-oriented.

Still further, Aouad neither discloses nor suggests that the base 30 and/or the cover 31 are capable of lifting laundry items in the drum 27, as is the housing recited in independent claim 1.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is allowable over the applied combination, and thus the rejection of independent claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Roberts in view of Aouad should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 2-4 and 6-12 are allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 1, from which they depend, as well as for their added features.

The Office Action rejects claims 13-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Roberts and Aouad in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,211,689 to Kobayashi. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Dependent claims 13-16 are allowable over Roberts and Aouad at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 1, from which they depend, as well as for their added features. Further, Kobayashi is merely cited as allegedly teaching the use of ceramic powder, and thus fails to overcome the deficiencies of Roberts and Aouad. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 13-16 are allowable over the applied combination, and thus the rejection of claims 13-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Roberts, Aouad and Kobayashi should be withdrawn.

III. Objection to Claim 17

The Office Action objects to claim 17 under 37 CFR 1.75 as allegedly duplicating claim 20. It is respectfully submitted that, in light of the amendments to independent claim 1, there is no duplication between the subject matter of claim 17 and claim 20. Accordingly, the objection should be withdrawn.

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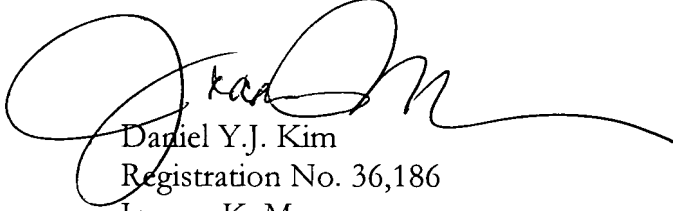
Docket No. K-0565

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned **Joanna K. Mason**, at the telephone number listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
KED & ASSOCIATES, LLP



Daniel Y.J. Kim
Registration No. 36,186
Joanna K. Mason
Registration No. 56,408

P.O. Box 221200
Chantilly, Virginia 20153-1200
703 766-3777 DYK;JKM:lhd

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Please direct all correspondence to Customer Number 34610